(c) what is the procedure laid down for travelling to Tibet; and

(d) whether travel to Tibet is encouraged or not?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) Government have statistics only pertaining to pilgrims and nationals engaged in border trade. The number of pilgrims to Kailsh and Mansarovar in Tibet for pilgrimage in 1992 was 233 and the number of traders who went to Tibet for border trade in the same period was 299.

(b) Some pilgrims have reported that they have faced difficulties in transportation and boarding and lodging in Tibet, which are not matters under our control.

(c) Indian pilgrims travelling for the Kailash-Mansarover yatra are issued Chinese visas by the Chinese Embassy in Delhi, while those crossing the India-China border for border trade at Lipulekh Pass do so on a special Travel Pass issued by the Pithoragarh, UP district authorities.

(d) Government does not discourage travel to Tibet.

No flag hoisting on Republic Day by Indian Embassy in Sudan

4130. SHRI SOM PAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian embassy at Khartoum, the capital of Sudan did not hoist the national flag on Republic Day this year;

(b) whether it is also a fact that such a lapse has occurred for the first time during the past 25 years; and

(c) if so, what action Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) and (b) The manner in which Republic Day is celebrated by our Missions abroad varies depending on local circumstances and exigencies Flag hoisting in the morning is customary. The last Republic Day was celebrated in Khartoum by our Embassy with a reception, at which local dignitaries, diplomats and all members of the Indian community were invited.

(c) Does not arise.

Indo-pak bilateral relations after bomb explosion in Bombay and Calcutta

4131. SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER:

SHRI RAM GOPAL YADAV:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistan's hand has been found either directly or indirectly in recent bomb explosion in Bombay and in Calcutta and day by day incidents of bomb blasts in both these cities;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government stating its clear stand on the matter/incidents; and

(c) its impact on Indo-Pak bilateral relations as well as on Indian people?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) Six persons wanted by the investigating authorities in the Bombay explosions case are known to have proceeded from UAE to Karachi on March 17, 1993.

(b) The Pakistan Government have been requested to cooperate in locating, apprehending and returning the suspects to India.

(c) Impact on Indo-Pak relations will depend on Pakistan's response.

Nuclear capaci of Pakistan

4132. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the reported statement of Pakistan Prime Minister that Pakistan had acquired nuclear capability;